



# News for Stakeholders

March 2011

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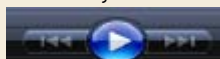
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## Administrator's Message



Cindy Smith



## QUICK LINKS

- APHIS Launches New Asian Longhorned Beetle Science Curriculum
- APHIS Launches New Image Gallery
- USDA Seeks Nominations for National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee
- APHIS Investigative and Enforcement Services Helps U.S. Attorney's Office Secure first Felony Conviction under the Plant Protection Act.
- APHIS and the Navajo Nation Prepare for Emergency Response Exercise on Tribal Lands
- Plant Protection and Quarantine's Official Control Program Gets New Name
- Animal Care to Host Scientific Seminar on Tuberculosis in Elephants
- Going Global: APHIS International Services Releases Strategic Plan
- APHIS YouTube Feature of the Month: "Canada Goose Egg Oiling Basics"
- APHIS Employee Feature: Carl Etsitty, Plant Protection and Quarantine
- Vacancies in APHIS

## APHIS Launches New Asian Longhorned Beetle Science Curriculum

In a continuing effort to find any unknown infestations of the destructive Asian longhorned beetle (ALB), APHIS is launching a new educational curriculum designed to allow educators to bring local science right into their classrooms. The "Beetle Busters" curriculum allows educators and students to take action together to detect infestations of the ALB and stop it from spreading by recognizing the beetle, searching for it and reporting findings online. The multi-unit program includes standards-based, age-appropriate activities for 3rd through 8th grades and 9th-10th grade science classes, and includes a unit for after-school programs.



# News for Stakeholders

March 2011



“Beetle Busters is the newest educational initiative of our ongoing efforts to eradicate this invasive insect from at-risk communities across the United States,” said Christine Markham, National Director of the ALB cooperative eradication program. “Many educators have been seeking a curriculum tailored to this critical issue. The curriculum is designed to help educators achieve their teaching goals, while challenging students to make a difference in their community.”

APHIS is offering educators a free curriculum “kit” that includes a teacher’s guide, a classroom poster, a classroom-set of identification cards and bookmarks, as well as the online game called “Freeze & Collect” for use in-class or at-home. Supplies are limited and are fulfilled on a first come, first served basis, however all of the kit components are available for download online. Educators can order their copy of the kit at <http://BeetleBustersKit.com/>.

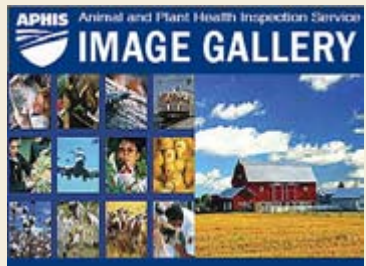
ALB threatens urban and suburban trees, as well as valued forest resources. The invasive pest has devastated communities around the country; causing entire neighborhoods to lose many of their trees. To learn more about this educational initiative, please visit the Beetle Busters site at: <http://www.BeatleBusters.info/>.





# News for Stakeholders

March 2011



## APHIS Launches New Image Gallery

APHIS recently expanded its Internet resources by adding a free image gallery that includes high-resolution photographs of the Agency's diverse work.

The new image gallery contains approximately 200 photographs of the Agency's animal health and welfare, plant health, biotechnology and wildlife management work. The images are available for public use and stakeholders can browse the collection or search using keywords. Additional features include a slideshow builder and a "My Favorites" tab. These features allow users to select and categorize pictures and create separate display pages and slideshows. The site also includes a help page for troubleshooting. Stakeholders are encouraged to visit the image gallery often as material will be updated regularly.

The images are available in JPEG format for direct download for Web use and high-resolution files are available for print and publications. The images may not be used to infer or imply USDA or APHIS endorsement of any product, company, or position. Any images used on a Web site, publication, or any other project must credit USDA, APHIS and the photographer (if known). The Image Gallery is available online at [images.aphis.usda.gov](http://images.aphis.usda.gov) or through the APHIS Homepage.



# News for Stakeholders

March 2011

## USDA Seeks Nominations for National Wildlife Services Advisory Committee

USDA is currently accepting nominations for individuals to serve on the Secretary's National Wildlife Services (WS) Advisory Committee. Members serve two-year terms and nominations are due April 12.

For over 20 years, the committee has served as a public forum enabling those affected by WS to have a voice in the program's policies. WS provides federal leadership in managing problems caused by wildlife. WS strives to develop and use wildlife damage management strategies that are biologically sound, environmentally safe, and socially acceptable.

USDA is seeking applications for individuals from interested organizations, the academic community, stakeholder groups, individuals and other related parties. Selected individuals can serve up to three consecutive two-year terms. Past membership on the 20-member committee has represented a broad array of agriculture, animal welfare and wildlife interests.

Nominations and requests or further information should be addressed to Joanne Garrett, Director, Operation Support Staff, USDA, APHIS, WS 4700 River Road, Unit 87, Riverdale, MD 20737; 301-734-7921





# News for Stakeholders

March 2011



## APHIS Investigative and Enforcement Services Helps U.S. Attorney's Office Secure first Felony Conviction under the Plant Protection Act.

Investigative and Enforcement Services (IES) is the APHIS unit responsible for helping animal and agricultural industries achieve compliance with APHIS regulations through comprehensive investigations, sound enforcement, and strong educational efforts. As part of this, IES coordinates efforts throughout APHIS, USDA, and cooperating agencies to resolve violations of agricultural health laws, such as the Plant Protection Act (PPA).

Recently, IES helped the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Florida secure the first felony conviction under the PPA for violations incurred by Prime Airport Services, Inc. (PRIME), a ground cargo handler, at Miami International Airport. The PRIME conviction is based on information provided from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to IES between 2005 and 2010 concerning alleged violations committed by PRIME including the unauthorized movement of articles from the port of entry, unauthorized movement and subsequent release of commodities known to be infested with plant pests, failure to destroy commodities as ordered, failure to provide prescribed fumigations as ordered, and failure to re-export commodities as ordered.

Operating as an immediate handler, PRIME was responsible for the manipulation of cargo upon aircraft arrival in Miami. This included the transferring of cargo destined for entry into the United States off the aircraft and into storage areas pending inspection, the segregation of cargo pending remedial measures and other port side operations. Using information furnished from CBP, IES Investigators were able to establish that PRIME was responsible for multiple infractions of the PPA.



# News for Stakeholders

March 2011

Due to the efforts of IES Investigators, PRIME entered a guilty plea and was ordered to pay a \$1 million fine plus an \$800 court assessment fee.

As subject matter experts, IES Investigators provided regulatory information, collected evidence, met with potential government witnesses, assisted the U.S. Attorney's Office with defense counsel meetings, and attended court proceedings. For more information on IES, please click [here](#).



# News for Stakeholders

March 2011

## APHIS and the Navajo Nation Prepare for Emergency Response Exercise on Tribal Lands

This spring, APHIS will team with the Navajo Nation to conduct the first APHIS-sponsored full scale exercise on Tribal lands. Staff from APHIS' National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS) and the Navajo Nation's Veterinary and Livestock Program will work together during the exercise, which will provide a training environment for Tribal personnel. The exercise goals are for Tribal personnel to gain experience with the NVS request process; and to identify planning gaps, shortfalls, or limitations that could impair the Navajo Nation's ability to receive, store, and distribute NVS countermeasures in a real emergency.

The Navajo Nation NVS 2011 logistics exercise will focus on the *Navajo Nation National Veterinary Stockpile Tribal Plan*, which was finalized in December 2010. The Navajo plan also includes logistics processes for the Hopi Nation that lies within the Navajo reservation. According to Rodney White, NVS Director, "This unprecedented full-scale exercise on Tribal lands demonstrates the commitment of the NVS program to support our Tribal animal health partners. It provides the Navajo and Hopi Nations' emergency responders an opportunity to have hands-on experience working with the NVS countermeasures they would need in the event of a damaging animal disease outbreak, and allows an equal opportunity for APHIS VS regional personnel to see the NVS countermeasures and observe a simulated emergency response in action."

More than 50 participants are expected to attend the April exercise in the Navajo Nation's capital city of Window Rock, Arizona. In addition to members of Navajo and Hopi Tribes and APHIS personnel, other Western States and Tribes will send agriculture and emergency response personnel to observe the exercise.



# News for Stakeholders

March 2011

This year's exercise scenario sets the stage for the Navajo Nation to respond logistically to an outbreak of Rift Valley Fever in two Navajo counties and the Hopi Nation. Navajo animal health officials will request and receive NVS countermeasure support to respond to the outbreak, which will allow them to validate their ability to execute responsibilities and activities identified in their NVS Tribal plan, including conducting warehouse activities supporting field response. Other critical exercise objectives include warehouse facility validation and cold-chain management of simulated vaccine during shipment and storage.

## About NVS

NVS is the nation's repository of critical veterinary countermeasures, which include supplies, equipment, animal vaccines, and diagnostic test kits. It exists to provide States/Tribes/territories with the resources they need to respond to damaging animal disease outbreaks. NVS holds large quantities of countermeasures that it can deploy within 24 hours of a request. It also has partnerships with all-hazards response companies that can arrive within 24 hours to provide large numbers of trained personnel with equipment to help a State/Tribe/territory when it does not have enough of its own resources to depopulate, dispose, or decontaminate. For more information on NVS click [here](#).





# News for Stakeholders

March 2011

## Plant Protection and Quarantine's Official Control Program Gets New Name

Plant Protection and Quarantine's (PPQ) Official Control Program has taken on a new moniker: the Federally Recognized State Managed Phytosanitary Program or Free-Stamp for short. The program itself is not changing, only the name. The new name is a more descriptive way of characterizing the program, which will provide Federal recognition to qualified States who request special protection to prevent the introduction or establishment of a particular plant pest or disease that is otherwise not regulated by APHIS.

The program was originally named after the International Plant Protection Convention's (IPPC) Official Control program. PPQ, however, tailored the IPPC program to offer additional protection to States. The name change was requested by both States and trading partners to distinguish between the IPPC and PPQ initiatives.

Free-Stamp has been under development for several years and is scheduled to fully launch in December 2011. The program was initiated in recognition of the fact that different climates, geographies and industries may make a plant pest an environmental or economic problem in one State but not another. To address these unique situations, PPQ has been collaborating with the National Plant Board to set up a process by which State-level pest control and exclusion activities can be Federally recognized in the absence of a Federal program.

In order to be considered for the program, which is in the final stages of development, States will have to petition PPQ for recognition of their program. States with a common interest can collaborate and apply together. They will also have to provide, among other things, evidence that the pest is either present or absent in their State, that the pest could enter or become established, and that the pest could cause economic and/or environmental harm.



# News for Stakeholders

March 2011

Once a State's Free-Stamp petition is approved, PPQ will provide protection at ports of entry across the nation to ensure the pest is prevented from entering that State through international commerce. The State itself will be responsible for establishing eradication, control, monitoring or exclusion programs.

In addition to protecting against the introduction of potential plant health threats, the Free-Stamp program is also taking a look at foreign pests and diseases that are currently regulated by APHIS but already exist in the United States. These efforts have already resulted in the deregulation of eight pests and diseases, including jasmine whitefly and trilobite scale, that don't pose an environmental or economic threat here in the United States. Removing these pests and diseases from the regulated lists frees up resources at both the State and Federal level and enables resources to be concentrated on those plant pests and diseases that pose a real threat to U.S. agriculture.

PPQ has developed a comprehensive Web page dedicated to the Free-Stamp program:

[http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant\\_health/plant\\_pest\\_info/frsmp/index.shtml](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/plant_health/plant_pest_info/frsmp/index.shtml) You can also contact Diane Schuble, the program's National Coordinator, at 301-734-8723 or by email at [diane.l.schuble@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:diane.l.schuble@aphis.usda.gov).



# News for Stakeholders

March 2011



## Animal Care to Host Scientific Seminar on Tuberculosis in Elephants

As reported in our February issue, Animal Care (AC) is hosting a scientific seminar at its Center for Animal Welfare April 5-6, in Kansas City, MO, to discuss tuberculosis (TB) in elephants. The seminar is open to professionals, such as elephant veterinarians, zoo and circus directors/officials, and researchers as well as elephant stakeholders and the general public.

The purpose of the seminar is to summarize the current state of knowledge regarding TB in elephants and to dispel misinformation about testing and the disease itself. Presentations will be given by leaders in the field and will address diagnosis, treatment, epidemiology, and public health. Information generated by the seminar will be made available electronically following the event.

The seminar is free but pre-registration is required. To register, click on the following link: <https://web01.aphis.usda.gov/MeetingReg.nsf/register?OpenForm>



# News for Stakeholders

March 2011

## Going Global: APHIS International Services Releases Strategic Plan

International Services (IS) was established in 1988 to further APHIS' goals of enhancing animal and plant health protection in a rapidly changing global environment. Today, international cooperation and strong international relationships continue to be, more than ever, an essential part of APHIS' strategy for protecting U.S. agricultural and natural resources from the ubiquitous threat of pests and diseases. Over the past 22 years, total U.S. agricultural trade with the rest of the world has increased by 192 percent (imports plus exports). This expansion in global trade has created new economic opportunities for U.S. producers, as well as increased U.S. exposure to pest and disease risks.

To directly address these global challenges, IS recently released a new 5-year strategic plan that is focused on three important goals. One goal is to work closely with foreign governments to prevent the spread of high-risk pests and diseases, such as fruit flies and foot-and-mouth disease (FMD). For example, IS supports surveillance activities in Mexico for citrus greening to protect the California, Arizona, and Texas citrus industries.

Another goal is to strengthen efforts to protect and expand overseas markets for U.S. agricultural goods (which support national, state, and local incomes and jobs) that are blocked or limited by unfair technical and regulatory barriers. In fiscal year 2010, IS contributed to the reopening or expansion of 108 markets around the world for U.S. exports valued at around \$2.4 billion. IS attachés also work to release shipments being held at ports of entry. Shipments can be held for a variety of reasons from improper paperwork to confusion on the part of the inspector at the port of entry. Because of their efforts in FY 2010, APHIS attachés successfully obtained the release of more than 294 individual shipments, worth more than \$48 million.



# News for Stakeholders

March 2011

The last goal is to broaden APHIS' safeguarding system by working with foreign governments to improve their capacity to detect and respond to emerging pests and disease threats at origin to pre-empt their spread and introduction in the United States. In light of last year's pandemic H1N1 influenza virus, it is incredibly important that IS help countries to strengthen and develop their capacity to monitor, survey, report, and rapidly respond to emerging plant pest and animal diseases before they spread and become larger regional or global threats.

The implementation and success of this new strategic plan is dependent upon not only IS but also the expertise of our APHIS colleagues. Their work is critical for the development of bilateral protocols as well as international plant and health standards aimed at mitigating the inherent risk that certain products will be quarantined by another country, sometimes without scientific cause. With this strategic plan in mind, IS seeks to play a leading role in strengthening APHIS' ability to anticipate and proactively respond to international pest and disease events while also supporting President Obama's National Export Initiative to increase U.S. exports in the coming years.





# News for Stakeholders

March 2011



Canada goose egg  
oiling

## APHIS YouTube Feature of the Month: "Canada Goose Egg Oiling Basics"

Large Canada goose populations can present a threat to public health and safety causing damage to property, agriculture and natural resources. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service allows the public to treat nests and eggs on their property during four months of each year from March 1 to June 30. This six-minute instructional video explains how members of the public can help stabilize or reduce Canada goose populations in accordance with Federal laws.

<http://www.youtube.com/usdaaphis#p/a/u/0/2CLIL-381Lw>



# News for Stakeholders

March 2011

## APHIS Employee Feature: Carl Etsitty, Plant Protection and Quarantine

**Name:** Carl Etsitty

**Title:** National Program Manager - PPQ Tribal Liaison

### Tell us about your role:

I have a wide range of responsibilities and duties from basic mentoring on Tribal issues and capacity building to providing comments/input on policies. My five basic functions are: (1) Policy and program advisor regarding Native American Programs as they relate to plant health issues; (2) Outreach and representation to Tribes, Tribal officials, and advocacy organizations; (3) Coordination of policies and initiatives with domestic policy council, OMB, other Federal Agencies, financing institutions, and constituency groups; (4) Oversee and manage data analysis, consultation, and research on Native American issues; and (5) Participate in the APHIS Native American Working Group, providing guidance to all State liaison representatives, establishing training initiatives, and providing direct training to PPQ staff and field on significant Native American issues.

### How long have you worked at APHIS:

I have worked at APHIS for approximately three years. The first two and half years I spent with Biotechnology Regulatory Services (BRS) as their Regional Biotechnologist, and American Indian Special Emphasis Program Manager. Before coming to APHIS, I spent approximately 9.5 years with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Pesticides Program/Biopesticides and Pollution Division, as a microbiologist - health and product chemistry risk assessor. I also spent 4 years in the U.S. Navy as a submariner.



Carl Etsitty  
National Program Manager -  
PPQ Tribal Liaison



# News for Stakeholders

March 2011

**Education:** Bachelor of Science/Environmental Sciences, and Master of Science/Soil, Water and Environmental Sciences, both from the University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ.

**Most Memorable APHIS experience:**

Being a part of APHIS' Tohono O'odham Land Connections project. I developed a BRS curriculum and presented to the high school age American Indian students. It was a great experience, in giving back to the community.

**Priorities for the coming months:**

In the next few months, my goal to put in place a PPQ American Indian/Alaskan Native Program Council or Team to address and identify barriers, and prioritize issues to enhance the program's working relationship with Tribes across the country, and work in tandem with the NPM - Tribal Liaison.

**Hobbies:**

My main hobbies lately have been playing chess, bowling, softball, and attending sporting events with family and friends.



# News for Stakeholders

March 2011



## Vacancies in APHIS

All Agency vacancies are posted on the APHIS Web site. To view the entire list of APHIS vacancies go to [www.aphis.usda.gov](http://www.aphis.usda.gov). Under Related Topics click on Find a Job in APHIS. The positions highlighted below are for relevant positions that are at the GS-13 level and above.

**Position:** [Interdisciplinary - Supervisory Veterinary Medical Officer/Microbiologist](#)

**Location:** Ames, Iowa

**Series & Grade:** GS-0403/0701-13/14

**Who May Apply:** All U.S. citizens

**Position Closes:** April 4, 2011

**Position:** [Supervisory Veterinary Medical Officer](#)

**Location:** Ames, Iowa

**Series & Grade:** GS-0701-14/14

**Who May Apply:** All U.S. citizens

**Position Closes:** April 11, 2011